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## Rob

## Rachael

### Job Description:

Assistant Principal;  
Special Education Director

Stay-at-Home Mom by day,  
Dance Teacher at night

### Education:

BA in Music Therapy,  
MAT in Special Education,  
Ed S in Administration

BA in Dance

### Favorites:

**Animal**  
Giraffe

**Animal**  
Any Sea Mammal

**Musical Group**  
Indigo Girls, Wilco, Radiohead

**Musical Group**  
Indigo Girls

**Olympic Event**  
Para Olympics

**Olympic Event**  
Gymnastics

**Restaurant**  
Crazy Sushi

**Restaurant**  
Einstein's Bagels

**Shopping Store**  
Guitar Center

**Shopping Store**  
Target

### Children:

Noah (5)

## What We Have to Offer as Parents

We live our lives by a strong sense of morals and feel the best we can offer our children is to be an example of those strong morals. We believe our purpose is to be role models and supports for our children, guiding them through life's obstacles, helping them to be strong individuals, and encouraging them to share their gifts with the world. We believe the purpose of parenting is to give and guide, love and trust, share and grow for the remainder of our lives.

During our time attempting to become parents we had a miscarriage and had difficulty getting pregnant. Eventually we did get pregnant and our son, Noah, was born. We consider Noah a miracle and know we are extremely lucky to have a child but we feel our family is not complete. Noah's development was slow and at age two we were told he had a mild form of autism. The doctor told us he was "quirky" and that he will require different forms of therapy to help his development. Noah's disability has become a source of inspiration for both of us. Neither of us knew that his disability would make us more human, better parents, and advocates for children with disabilities. Having a child with mild autism has taught us so much about tending to a child's needs while still encouraging their own self-development and confidence. Our son Noah is a delightful, intelligent, imaginative, funny child who cannot wait to become a big brother.

## Our Passions in Life

Before we even met, we were both individually active in the arts. Rob was a musician from an early age and performed in several school musical productions. He has been the lead singer / guitar player for several bands. He now has a recording studio in his basement and still writes and produces his own music in his spare time.

Rachael began dancing at age 9 and has loved it ever since. She also played the flute in the band in school and developed a love and appreciation of music. However dance was her number one love. After trying out a few different majors in college, Rachael eventually received her bachelor's degree in dance. Now she is enjoying her "dream job" as a dance teacher.

As we have both worked as teachers, education has become another of our passions. We are both avid readers and believe in reading to our child as often as possible. There is always the nighttime story but throughout the day there are also numerous opportunities to read. Books, magazines, and all types of reading materials spill across shelves and tables in our house. Reading is an everyday part of life for us and we share that passion enthusiastically. We believe education is a lifelong process that we enthusiastically share with those around us. We see education as a chance to ensure children a brighter future.



We Love to Read Books



Rob Performing at a Local Coffee House

# Rob & Rachael



Rachael and Noah at a Dance Recital

## Our Extended Families

**Rob's side:** Our extended family is a huge part of our lives. We live particularly close to Rob's parents, known affectionately as Maw-Maw and Papa, and their house is Noah's favorite place to visit. They spoil him with love and play time, as they do all of their grandchildren. They are the ideal grandparents, the best you could hope for your children to have. They are both already so excited at the prospect of having another grandchild join our family through adoption

Also not far away are Rob's two brothers and their families. Noah has 4 cousins on this side of the family. Of them, Tess is the only girl, closest to Noah in age, and she is Noah's favorite playmate. She also happens to be adopted from China.

Rob's mom is one of 9 children, and Rob has 18 cousins on her side of the family. The entire family is very supportive of one another. They really "pull together" in times of crisis, and celebrate together in times of joy. What really makes Rob's extended family unique is their amazing sense of humor, which has gotten them through many difficult times.

**Rachael's side:** Rachael is originally from Texas, and all of her family remains there. Noah has 2 cousins in Texas. He loves going there to visit them, and to see his "Nana". Rachael is very close to her mom, who will likely come visit us as soon as an adopted child joins our family.

**Traditions:** There are many activities we have enjoyed as a family that we will continue to do in the future. On weekends, holidays, and summers, we can be found at our family's lake in a



Rob's Parents and Noah's Cousins

rural part of the state. We go fishing, off-road vehicle riding, boating, and swimming. During the fall we visit the family "farm" with Rob's aunts, uncles and many cousins. The "farm" is another rural spot where there is a lot of exploring to do. There's always a huge fire to gather around and roast marshmallows. There are children to play with and family stories that get reenacted and become more grandiose as the years progress. Each trip has new traditions added and new memories made.

It is also tradition to make the long journey to see Rachael's family each summer. Our min-van, loaded with our belongings, journeys through many states. Each stop along the road has become associated with some type of tradition to make the long hours in the van more enjoyable for us all. Rachael's family has many traditions associated with catching up over a large and robust meal made with love and timeless family recipes.



Rachael's Extended Family

Our House & Neighborhood



We live in a 3-bedroom ranch-style house in a subdivision full of families with children of all ages. Our neighbors are extremely friendly and provide the neighborhood with a sense of community. We have a large, finished basement with lots of play area. Noah likes to play in the basement with his trains because there is plenty of floor space. We also have a spacious, fenced-in backyard with mature trees, and a hill that is great for sledding in winter.

One of the reasons we chose this particular area for our home was the walking trails and parks nearby. The park nearest us is just a bike-ride away, and we love to go there on nice days. We can go swimming in the pool, feed the ducks and turtles in the pond, have

a picnic in one of the pavilions, play on one of the 3 separate playgrounds for various ages, play basketball or tennis on the courts, walk or ride bikes on the trails, or just play with a ball or Frisbee in one of the large grassy areas.

We love our city. It is a beautiful, family-oriented community, with an excellent school district. Our son attends the public schools here and we have been very pleased with all of our experiences with them. He has loved every teacher he has had. We also have an amazing recreational center to which we belong, where every type of class and activity imaginable are offered, including all kinds of sports and arts.



Family Time at the Park

Special Moments Together



Autism Walk 2008



At the Family Lake



Sidewalk Chalk Drawing



On an RV Ride at the Lake

## Dear Birthparent(s),

We will never know how difficult it is for you to be in your situation. The decision before you is certainly not an easy one. We want you to know how much we admire and respect you for having the strength and compassion to consider us as an option for your baby. Prayers, photographs, letters will be the tokens of your journey and along each stop; the belief that you made the right decision will only grow stronger. It is our hope that somewhere in these words you will find comfort and peace.

Let us tell you a little about ourselves. As a couple we are known as Rob and Rachael, but we are already known as Mom and Dad to our 5-year old son. We started dating thirteen years ago and as of this year we have been married nine years. We consider our marriage and our son to be the best things we have ever done. We have been through challenges during our time together just like any other couple and our distinct personalities work to make the union between us stronger.

Rob has just finished his first year as an assistant principal at a high school. His job is both demanding and rewarding. He gets part of the summer off, which allows us to travel to visit family, and spend time at various family attractions locally. Rachael has been a dance instructor for the past 13 years, working mostly evenings, which means she is able to be a stay-at-home mom during the day. It has been an ideal situation for our family, as one of us can always be at home with Noah. Noah will begin kindergarten in July, and Rachael's days will once again be free, and she is looking forward to being stay-at-home mom to a second child.

We will be very open with this child from the very beginning about her adoption. We feel that there should be no mystery or shame around adoption, and answering questions in a straight-forward manner will help foster that philosophy. We will tell her that her birth mother loved her very much, and that she wanted to give her the best home possible, and after looking at several families, decided that we were the best family for her.

We will also have the support of our extended families in talking about adoption. Having several family members who were adopted, the topic comes up often. In our discussions about adoption it is important to us to allow the child to see, talk, and explore with other individuals who have been adopted.

We will gladly share pictures, letters, phone calls, and emails, to a level with which you are comfortable. We realize that at different times in your life your needs may change in regards to sharing information regarding the adoption.

We wish you well on your journey, knowing that the decision you will need to make is yours, and yours alone. Regardless of your decision we hope you find peace and comfort knowing there are many loving and caring families in need of a child to complete their family. Thank you for taking the time to consider us as a prospective adoptive family. We wish you the best on your journey.

Thank you,

**Rob and Rachael**

